

## **Girl on a Bed**

*Girl on a Bed* was first produced by Padua Playwrights at The Electric Lodge, Venice, CA, 2005, under the direction of Guy Zimmerman, and with the following cast:

**Gary** Christopher Allport  
**Laura** Niamh McCormally  
**Rondell** Hugh Dane  
**Antonio** David Carrera  
**Rena** Devon Carson  
**Danny** Andy Hopper  
**Gloria** Shannon Holt  
**Monica** Shawna Casey  
**Charles** Jack Kehler  
**Dr. Jones** Gray Palmer

## **Characters**

**Gary** Our hero, an actor  
**Dan** His son  
**Marcia** His present wife  
**Gloria** His ex-wife  
**Laura** A high-school senior  
**Rena** Her best friend  
**Charles** Her father  
**Monica** Her mother  
**Mrs. Williams** Her counselor  
**Dr. Jones** Her psychologist  
**Rondell** An ex-soldier  
**Antonio** Rondell's sometime associate  
**Chorus** Lines in italics

*“Death is a barking where there are no dogs.”*

*And so we imagine snow falling through a black night,  
ascribing meaning to time and experience.  
And Gary remembers his dead boy.  
Danny Boy.  
Before he was shot that fateful afternoon by an  
unknown assassin.  
A drive-by.  
A stupid junkie.  
A kid on a bike.  
We will never know.  
And his ashes were strewn into the Pacific.  
Dirty ashes into the dirty Pacific,  
And so who cares?  
Hopefully the Sun will burn it up one day, clean it up,  
purify it and glorify it, include it into itself in an  
endless blaze.  
But probably not.  
And even if it did it has nothing to do with us.  
Nothing to do with us.  
Who are here now mourning our losses.  
This is Gary.*

**Gary** Hello.  
*We play our parts and say what needs to be said in  
this sad story.  
But true.  
Sad but true. So let's go.*

**Gary** We're in this room.  
*Interior. Day.*

**Gary** We're in this room. *(Weeps)*  
*Okay. Okay. Then what happened?*

**Gary** I go over there, to his apartment, downtown.  
*Whose? Dan's? Your boy's?*

**Gary** Yes. Not really an apartment. It's a room, downtown,  
near the park.  
*Downtown?*

**Gary** What I say?  
*Downtown.*

**Gary** And there's two guys in there. Criminals. Scumbags.  
*Here we are: Downtown, in a room.*

**Dan** This is my Dad.

**Gary** Who are these people, Daniel?

**Dan** Antonio and Rondell.

**Gary** Who are they?

**Dan** They are my friends.

**Gary** They are not your friends. They can't be your friends.

**Dan** Antonio and Rondell.

**Gary** *(To Audience)* And that's how ordinary life came to an  
end. The ordinary pleasures of life. The family gather-  
ing, the picnic, the holiday, the movie, the marriage,  
the ball game. Life was worthless and had no meaning.  
Trash. Then he was shot in the park. Probably by some  
spic junkie, some greaser know-nothing homeboy,  
some dumb-ass mower and blower, some migrant from  
the jungle South, the impoverished South, with his  
pop-gun, his strut, his gold chain, his wise-ass mum-  
bo-jumbo, his loud-mouth bullshit, his toothless grin,  
his shit-eating attitude, the fucking fathead piece of shit.

*Pause.*

*You don't know that, Gary.*

**Gary** *(To Audience)* I'm sorry.  
*You're a racist.*

**Gary** I'm sorry.  
*You're a racist, Gary.*

**Gary** I'm not, really.  
*You're a fucking racist.*

**Gary** And you're nothing much either, I might add.  
*And on top of that—you were going to kill somebody.*

**Gary** Shit on a stick is the phrase that comes to mind.  
*Remember that?*

**Gary** Shit on a stick, walking around, making noise. Quack, quack. You have any more questions?  
*Yes, I do. Is there hope?*

**Gary** Yes, there is hope. But it's not where you think it is.  
*Where do I think it is?*

**Gary** You think it's in the future, you think it's in the past.  
*I see.*

**Gary** But I'll tell you where it is.  
*Tell, tell.*

**Gary** It's up your ass. Just as you thought! *(Laughs)* Okay?  
*You're in a bad way, Gary.*  
*You're depressed.*

*GARY laughs*

*You're demented.*  
*It's no joke. I think you should apologize.*  
*(To Audience)* He'll laugh like that for about twenty minutes now.

*Let's cut.*  
*Cut to twenty mintutes later. Interior. Day.*  
*Rats live down here. And crazy people, people with ideas.*

**Antonio** Hey!  
*Like Antonio.*

**Antonio** Hey, you whitebread piece of shit.  
*Don't say anything, Gary.*

**Gary** Fuck off, greaseball.

**Antonio** Hey! Gringo! Hijo de puta!

**Gary** Go back to Mexcio and make noise. Run your blowers at the wind.  
*Now you did it.*

**Gary** In the fucking dust, in the fucking Grim.  
*Ha!*

**Gary** And the black guy's a slob. Rondell. This is Rondell.

**Rondell** Take it easy, Gary.

**Gary** We're not gonna be able to do this. See the story, find the meaning of the story.

**Rondell** We can try, we can try. That's why we're here, am I right?

**Gary** We can see it, but we can't understand it.  
*We'll take a look. Interior. Day.*

**Gary** It's sad. That's all I'll say.  
*We'll need Danny Boy, back from the dead.*

**Dan** I'm doing Danny.  
*We need Laura J. Back from the dead.*

**Laura** I'll do Laura.  
*We need Antonio.*  
*(Who is Death himself.)*

*Whom we've already met.*

**Antonio** Yo, 'Mano. Here I am.  
*We'll need the parents, whoever they are.*  
*Let's see what happens. Let's see if we can find them.*  
*You start, Dan.*

**Dan** Laura?

**Laura** Hi.

**Dan** We're in this room. And there's a girl on the bed.  
*Interior. Day.*

**Dan** There's a girl on the bed.  
*Go on.*

**Dan** There's a girl on the bed. And she's dead. You know?  
And I didn't realize it. And then I realized, holy shit,  
it's the same girl.  
*The same girl?*

**Dan** As the one I saw. On the video.  
*Laura?*

**Laura** Hi.

**Dan** Doing these guys. One after the other, two at a time,  
and so on.  
*Yes.*

**Dan** And then I'm sitting there, and I go: Who's the girl?  
*Is it Laura?*

**Dan** On the bed. What's up? Is she asleep? What's that  
smell? I was alone at the time. When I realized. I was  
alone in the room with a dead person.  
*Interior Room. Day. A disgraceful, filthy room,*  
*without light, where Danny sits staring into space. In*  
*the background, a body on a bed. It's Laura. She's*  
*dead.*

**Dan** I realized I had seen this girl before.  
*He'd seen her in a porno film. Laura. And he'd met her*  
*at a meeting once, by chance.*

**Dan** She seemed nice. She seemed lonely. She looked like she  
was glad to be with these guys. I liked her. I thought,  
she must be using. On the other hand, she was grateful  
for the contact, the sexual embrace, the attention. So it  
was interesting, because she was enjoying herself.

**Gary** On the other hand, I feel sick for the stupidity of  
the universe.  
*No, that's you, Gary, not the universe.*

**Gary** The depravity and mindless exploitation.  
*The universe is not stupid.*

**Gary** The endless competition.  
*Agree with you there.*

**Gary** I'm sick of it.  
*We all agree.*

**Gary** Along with the reproductive process.  
*It's you, Gary. This has nothing to do with Danny*  
*Boy. It's all you. It's all on you.*

**Gary** This stupid culture with its stupid fat people on a  
stupid planet.  
*Thanks, Gary.*  
*Sit down.*

**Gary** I feel for this girl.  
*We know you do.*

**Gary** She could be my daughter.  
*She could be, but she isn't.*  
*Don't start crying.*

**Gary** I'm sorry.

*Cut to Laura. Close.*

**Laura** Well. There were a couple of the guys I knew in the film, plus I knew the producer, but it was really about the money. And something about seeing yourself, seeing yourself on the screen. You know, like falling. And I do like to be touched, I really do.

**Gary** As we try to live amidst the stupid cars and the garbage and the fumes.

**Laura** It's not me so much as the story of me, which is different.

**Gary** Interesting.

**Laura** It's not me.  
*Angle—Danny.*

**Dan** I could tell she was lonely there. I could tell she wanted love.

**Gary** You become a junkie because nothing lasts. You got to do everything again and again and again.

**Dan** You want to be happy. You want to feel good.

**Gary** And then you do it again.

**Laura** It's not me. It's only the story of me.

**Dan** What did you want then?

**Laura** I said to Rondell: If something happens, don't bring me back.  
*Angle—Rondell.*

**Laura** Let me go.

**Rondell** What?

**Laura** Okay?

**Rondell** What you say, girl?

**Laura** If I OD, you know?

**Rondell** No, what?

**Laura** Let it go. Let me be. Okay?

**Rondell** No.

**Laura** Just leave me there.

**Rondell** I won't. I won't do that.

**Laura** Thanks a lot.

**Rondell** He'll do it. Antonio.

**Laura** Thanks.

**Rondell** He's the Angel of Death. Not me.  
*Back to Gary.*  
*Who could be imagining this confrontation with the notorious Rondell.*

**Gary** What do you think about anything? Do you ever think about anything?

**Rondell** Who?

**Gary** You, Rondell.

**Rondell** Me?

**Gary** I'm talking to you.

**Rondell** Fuck you, I don't have to talk to you.

**Gary** Fucking ignorant asshole.

**Rondell** No. The answer is no. I'm not interested in thinking about anything because there's nothing to think about. There is fucking nothing to think about. I just stay high, and that's all I want to do. So maybe I think about money, because you need money or a gun.

**Gary** You don't care?

**Rondell** No, but I keep my word, I keep my promises, which is more than I can say for most people.

**Gary** So you'd let her die?

**Rondell** There's nothing you can do. Once they get there, they're gone.

**Gary** Where? Once they get where?

**Rondell** Down, man, down.

**Gary** Why?

**Rondell** You can't bring them back. Once you go that far, you can't come back.  
*Exterior Day—Gary and Danny's mom, Gloria, in the San Fernando Valley.*

**Gary** I'm trying to understand myself.

**Gloria** Are you?

**Gary** Yes.

**Gloria** That's good.

**Gary** It's not easy.

**Gloria** No.

**Gary** Pretty near impossible.

**Gloria** Pretty near?  
*Pretty near?*

**Gary** Pretty near.

**Gloria** How're you doing that, exactly?

**Gary** Maybe we should talk another time.

**Gloria** That's all right, never mind.

**Gary** I go to meetings, I see a shrink.

**Gloria** Good, Gary.

**Gary** And so on.

**Gloria** That's good. And Marcia? How's Marcia?

**Gary** She's good.

**Gloria** I'm glad. What's up?

**Gary** There's a lot of suffering in the world, Gloria.

**Gloria** I know that.

**Gary** Why?

**Gloria** I don't know why. Come up with it, Gary. I have things to do.

**Gary** I don't want to worry you.

**Gloria** Is it Dan?

**Gary** I think he's using.

**Gloria** What?

**Gary** I think he's using drugs.

**Gloria** What drugs?

**Gary** Hard drugs.  
*Interior Day—Laura in high school, with her counselor, whose name is Mrs. Williams.*

**Mrs. Williams** Do you feel like you have emotional problems?

**Laura** Not really, no.

**Mrs. Williams** How do you feel?

**Laura** I feel fine.

**Mrs. Williams** You ever get down?

**Laura** Get down?

**Mrs. Williams** You know, on yourself.

**Laura** Not really.

**Mrs. Williams** In school?

**Laura** School is a nightmare.

**Mrs. Williams** How so?

**Laura** Because it's dangerous. The kids have knives and guns and the teachers try to scare you. You have these ignorant fat people yelling at you all the time how you're going to be homeless and die. And I think they're right.

**Mrs. Williams** How so?

**Laura** I think I will be homeless and die.

**Mrs. Williams** Why is that? Why should that happen?

**Laura** Because that's my future, because I have no other future. There is no other future for me.

**Mrs. Williams** Who told you that?

**Laura** Everybody tells me that.

**Mrs. Williams** Your parents tell you that, too?

**Laura** Especially my parents. They're sick people and they take it out on me, because they're so disillusioned and sick.

**Mrs. Williams** What's wrong with them?

**Laura** They're mean. Well, I shouldn't say that.

**Mrs. Williams** Go on.

**Laura** They're just cold and mean.

**Mrs. Williams** Do you think we could all meet together some time?

**Laura** Not my father so much. And my mom's okay. Actually. She just never comes down.

**Mrs. Williams** Down?

**Laura** Stairs.

**Mrs. Williams** Did you hear what I asked?

**Laura** No.

**Mrs. Williams** Can we all meet together?

**Laura** She drinks.

**Mrs. Williams** Could I try to set it up?

**Laura** Sure, I guess you could try.

**Mrs. Williams** Good, then I think I will.

**Laura** Whatever.

*Pause.*

**Mrs. Williams** I don't have any more time right now.

**Laura** I wish people would do one thing without money being attached to it. One thing. Just one nice thing.

**Mrs. Williams** Laura.

**Laura** Who cares? If you have some other jerk coming in here? I don't give a fuck about that. That's your problem.

**Mrs. Williams** You have a lot of anger, Laura.

**Laura** Yeah, I do, because there isn't a single thing that's done that's done for Christian reasons, not one.

**Mrs. Williams** Christian?

**Laura** You heard me. This is supposed to be a Christian country.

**Mrs. Williams** I'm glad you can let some of that anger out.

**Laura** Thank you. Thanks a lot.  
*She doesn't leave. She stares at the stupid green wall.*

**Laura** We live like dogs.  
*She says.*

**Mrs. Williams** I'm sorry you feel that way.

**Laura** Are you?

**Mrs. Williams** Yes, I am.

**Laura** I think you're lying.

**Mrs. Williams** Laura?

**Laura** You're not sorry at all.

**Mrs. Williams** Really, Laura.

**Laura** You want me to leave so you can bullshit the next asshole who walks in here.

**Mrs. Williams** We do have to stop.

**Laura** It's all an act and you don't even know it.

**Mrs. Williams** Excuse me, Laura.  
*Cut to: Rondell and Danny Boy.*

**Rondell** You like acting, kid?  
**Dan** Yeah, I do, I like acting.  
**Rondell** Do you have any confidence or do you freeze up inside?  
**Dan** I freeze up.  
**Rondell** That's what I thought.  
**Dan** Why'd you think that?  
**Rondell** You're like me. I can see it in your body.  
**Dan** What?  
**Rondell** I can see it in your body armor. Rather, your body is armor. That's why you can't have any relationships.  
**Dan** That's not true.  
**Rondell** Really? Who do you love?  
**Dan** I love my mom. I love my dad. I have a girlfriend.  
**Rondell** You have a girlfriend?  
**Dan** Sure I do.  
**Rondell** What's her name?  
**Dan** I don't want to talk about her.  
**Rondell** She have a name?  
**Dan** Of course she has a name. She's not nameless.  
**Rondell** What is it?  
**Dan** I'm not gonna tell you her name.  
**Rondell** Okay. Your parents?  
**Dan** What?  
**Rondell** Are they divorced?  
**Dan** They're divorced.  
**Rondell** Because your dad couldn't talk either, probably.  
**Dan** My dad can talk.  
**Rondell** He can't communicate either.  
**Dan** My dad's an actor.  
**Rondell** You picked it up from him.

**Dan** What?  
**Rondell** The failure to communicate.  
**Dan** I don't think that's true.  
**Rondell** You say that a lot.  
**Dan** What?  
**Rondell** I don't think that's true. You don't know, actually, do you?  
**Dan** What?  
**Rondell** What's true.  
**Dan** Does anybody?  
**Rondell** Yeah, me. I know. Because I'm a soldier, among other things.  
**Dan** What's true?  
**Rondell** We just shot up, didn't we. We just fixed.  
**Dan** But I didn't shoot up, remember.  
**Rondell** Oh, that's right, I forgot. So you think you're not as bad as me now.  
**Dan** I snorted, is all.  
**Rondell** You snorted, right. So, anyway, shooted, snorted—we're relaxed now. Is that true?  
**Dan** I guess so.  
**Rondell** Sure it's true. That's why you like it. You can relax inside your armor. And I'll bet your dad is too.  
**Dan** Is what?  
**Rondell** Is dysfunctional. What's his name?  
**Dan** Gary.  
**Rondell** Yeah, Gary. You got a lot of things from Gary. Frozen stiff and a gimp walk and acting.  
**Dan** You know my father?

**Rondell** I know him through you. Boys are their fathers and girls are their mothers. Dysfunctional people breed dysfunctional people.

**Dan** What are you, a psychologist?

**Rondell** I'm an army man and I'm a drug addict.

**Dan** Sorry.

**Rondell** That's how I know. That's how I relax. So I don't need love and I don't need sex. You follow me?

**Dan** I think so.

**Rondell** You think?

**Dan** I don't know.

**Rondell** That's my choice. Some guys drink themselves to death. And you?

**Dan** I don't know.

**Rondell** That's for sure. That's the truth. I'm helping you now, whether you realize it or not, and you don't realize it. Because I'm satisfied for a minute. Otherwise I don't give a shit. You follow me? I'm an addict. That's my choice.

**Dan** My father re-married.

**Rondell** They get along?

**Dan** Sure.

**Rondell** You?

**Dan** I get along fine.

**Rondell** With his new wife? You get along with his wife?

**Dan** Sure.

**Rondell** That's nice.

**Dan** They wouldn't like it if they knew, like, you know.

**Rondell** They're right. They're right to worry. And your mom?

**Dan** My mom?

**Rondell** Your real mom. You see her?

**Dan** Of course I do.

**Rondell** That's nice.  
*Cut to: The gorgeous Laura. This teen American beauty. Monica, her mom, is upstairs.*

**Laura** I go home and I don't know what to do. I have all this energy. I should be worried about my future, but am I? No, because cars are the future. The only future is more cars. How could I be interested in that? More and more cars. And for cars we need oil, more and more oil.

**Monica** Laura?

**Laura** Yeah.

**Monica** Is that you?

**Laura** It's me.

**Monica** I want to talk to you.

**Laura** I can't right now.

**Monica** I want to talk to you.

**Laura** I'm busy.

**Monica** Don't use that tone with your mother.

**Laura** What tone?

**Monica** You know what tone.  
*Pause.*

**Monica** Did you hear me?

**Laura** How could I not hear you?  
*Pause.*

**Monica** Just don't do it.

**Laura** Mom?  
*Pause.*

**Laura** I was thinking about my future.

*Pause.*

**Laura** Are you interested?

**Monica** You have no future.

**Laura** Oh.

**Monica** Not the way you act.

**Laura** Oh.

**Monica** No future for you, kid.

**Laura** I was thinking it was cars, actually. More and more cars. That's what we need. Cars and oil. Then everyone will be happy.

**Monica** Not you.

**Laura** Thanks, Mom.

**Monica** You're welcome.

*Pause.*

**Monica** That's what happens when you talk nasty to your mother.

*Enter CHARLES.*

**Laura** Dad?

**Charles** Hi, Laura. Where's your mother?

**Laura** Upstairs.

**Charles** Okay.

**Laura** Scared, Dad?

**Charles** What do you mean?

**Laura** You scared of Mom?

**Charles** Laura.

**Laura** What?

**Charles** Don't talk like that.

**Laura** Why don't you admit it?

**Charles** I'm your father.

**Laura** Why don't you go upstairs?

**Charles** No reason.

**Laura** It's because you're scared. It's because she'll say something to belittle you. And she will, too. Sooner or later, she will. Maybe around the third drink. Because she's disappointed in you. Mainly she's disappointed, our Monica, so she takes it out on us. Don't cry, Dad.

**Charles** I'm not crying.

**Laura** We were talking about my future.

**Charles** Good.

**Laura** It wasn't good. Why do you say good when it wasn't good?

**Charles** I didn't know.

**Laura** Well, it wasn't. Anyway, I know your future. You want to know?

**Charles** All right, tell me.

**Laura** It's fear. It's a future of fear. You're afraid now and you'll just keep on being afraid. Do you want to know why?

**Charles** Not really, no.

**Laura** Because you're getting older. You're getting older and weaker. You're getting bent and gaspy, and she doesn't want to take care of you. Don't cry, Dad.

**Charles** I'm not crying.

**Laura** And I know my future, too. You want to hear it?

**Charles** Sure.

**Laura** It's no future, Dad, nada, nothing, none, zero, zilch. Ask Mom.

**Charles** HONEY?

**Laura** She's busy.

**Charles** HONEY?

**Monica** NOT NOW!

**Laura** I told you, Dad.  
**Charles** I'M HOME!  
**Monica** NOT NOW. DON'T BOTHER ME NOW!  
**Charles** OKAY!  
*Pause*  
**Laura** The whole world hates America, you know. The whole world hates us and fears us. Why, Dad?  
**Charles** Because we're gross and stupid.  
**Laura** Can I go out?  
**Charles** No.  
**Monica** WHERE TO?  
**Laura** THE MALL.  
**Monica** No.  
**Charles** You know you can't go out to the mall.  
**Monica** TO DO WHAT?  
**Laura** I'm not gonna buy anything.  
**Monica** TO STARE AT THE BOYS AND TAKE DOPE.  
**Charles** No way.  
**Monica** AND ACT GROSS AND STUPID.  
**Laura** I'll do what I want.  
**Monica** WHAT'S THAT?  
**Laura** I'LL DO WHAT I WANT.  
**Monica** GO AHEAD, LAURA.  
**Laura** I WILL.  
**Monica** THEN DON'T COME BACK.  
**Laura** I WON'T.  
**Charles** Hold on, Laura.  
**Laura** You're all such a bunch of liars and cheats, Dad. Enron and Associates.  
**Charles** But not you?

**Laura** I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF.  
**Monica** REALLY?  
**Laura** YEAH!  
**Monica** BY SELLING YOUR ASS?  
**Laura** THAT'S RIGHT, MOM.  
**Monica** THEN DON'T EVER COME BACK HERE, LAURA.  
**Laura** FINE, I WON'T.  
**Charles** Have something to eat.  
**Laura** I'm not hungry.  
**Charles** How 'bout some tea?  
**Laura** Are you kidding, Dad?  
**Charles** I'm having some.  
**Laura** Don't you understand what's going on, Dad?  
**Charles** I think you're having problems.  
**Monica** I THINK SHE'S HAVING SERIOUS PROBLEMS.  
**Laura** You're terrified of her.  
**Charles** No, I'm not.  
**Laura** Yes, you are.  
**Monica** I HEARD THAT.  
**Laura** It's not MY problem.  
*Laura goes to the bathroom. Charles stands, hesitates, looks up, starts for the stairs, changes his mind and goes into the kitchen. Sound of water running. Cut to: Rondell and Dan.*  
**Rondell** It doesn't take long to see what we're made of, see what kind of weird animal we are. Holes on both ends. Two eyes and a nose.  
**Dan** Excuse me?  
**Rondell** You've seen that already, haven't you?  
**Dan** I think I have.

**Rondell** Two ears. Everything by twos. What do you make of that?

**Dan** I don't know what to make of it.

**Rondell** I suppose things sort of bounce off of you, because of your youth.

**Dan** No, I get, uh, disturbed. I'm disturbed by it.

**Rondell** What do you think it's all about?

**Dan** I don't know.

**Rondell** That's why I get off, so to speak, stop worrying about it.

**Dan** You worry about it?

**Rondell** Sure I do, what do you think? I'm sensitive. This surprises you?

**Dan** I guess so.

**Rondell** It gets to you too, I think. The blood and guts of it all, the shitting and pissing and ferocity of it all. Don't you think? That's why you like the big H.  
*Join the Army and you'll see for yourself. Blood and guts.*

**Dan** Yeah, I guess.

**Rondell** But if you see the truth, it ought to set you straight, don't you think?

**Dan** I guess.

**Rondell** You can't guess. This ain't guesswork. It's the truth or it ain't. Don't you think?

**Dan** I should stop.

**Rondell** Absolutely. This surprises you, I would say that?

**Dan** I guess so.

**Rondell** Stop guessing so much.

**Dan** I never shoot it. I only snort.

**Rondell** You hear yourself on that?

**Dan** I heard it.

**Rondell** It don't mean shit. There ain't no difference. It's a shit-eating life, any old way.

**Dan** I hear you there, Rondell.

**Rondell** It's for people who want to die, mainly, and I don't interfere.

**Dan** Everybody dies.

**Rondell** I mean on purpose. I don't think you're a candidate for that. Do you?

**Dan** Uh, no, actually, I'm not.

**Rondell** Yeah. I see that. I see that. It's not you.  
*Pause. He's thinking. What could he be thinking?*

**Rondell** You need to see that for yourself. For real. Your dad is looking for you, kid.

**Dan** Gary?

**Rondell** Word's out, he's looking for his Danny Boy.

**Dan** Okay.

**Rondell** Give him a ring. Use your cell.

**Dan** Okay, later.

**Rondell** Fine. You want to watch some sex now?

**Dan** Sure.

**Rondell** It's interesting stuff. I don't get off on it, but it's interesting. Interesting behavior.  
*Cut to: Gary and Marcia.*

**Gary** I saw this guy, he's walking the street, young guy, he's got his worldly possessions on his shoulder, I saw him hitting on another guy with a bike.

**Marcia** Gary?

**Gary** This was on Wilshire Boulevard.

**Marcia** He hit him with a bike?

**Gary** No, Marcia.

**Marcia** Sorry.

**Gary** The guy being hit on had the bike.

**Marcia** I get it.

**Gary** He just starts talking, it's a form of aggression, you know? White guy. He starts talking about the bike, and he's hitting on this other guy, on the bike, he was pretty scared.

**Marcia** What's so fascinating?

**Gary** I could see both sides, I could be both people.

**Marcia** That's why you're good at it. That's why you're good at acting. You're a good actor.

**Gary** Thank you.

**Marcia** You have good empathy and imagination.

**Gary** It saddened me.

**Marcia** You're a sad guy.

**Gary** It frightened me.

**Marcia** And also a frightened guy.

**Gary** Really, Marcia.

**Marcia** Why?

**Gary** Because it could be me. I really understood that. It could be me. You like your bike, the guy says, it's a nice bike, cool bike. You like it? You enjoy it? You should. You should enjoy it. Enjoy your bike. It'll soon be over, all the good things we take for granted—holidays, family gatherings, domestic issues, job problems, traffic, open tunnels, cheap gas, public entertainment—it'll all be over. When? I'll tell you: when the Islamists defeat America. Okay? Is that worth a dollar to you? One dollar?

**Marcia** It'll never happen, Gary.

**Gary** That was *his* rant, not mine.

**Marcia** You seen Danny?

**Gary** No.

**Marcia** I miss him.

**Gary** I went looking for him, he's never home any more, he's over at that guy Rondell's a lot.

**Marcia** He's a junkie isn't he? Isn't Rondell a major junkie?

**Gary** He's an ex-Army guy.

**Marcia** A junkie.

**Gary** I believe so, yes.

**Marcia** You know he is, Gary.

**Gary** I know he is.

**Marcia** You have to stop it. You have to stop Danny from going over there.

**Gary** How, Marcia?

**Marcia** We'll have to intervene. We'll have to have a major intervention.

*Back to: Charles, with Monica. He sits with his head in his hands.*

**Monica** Why are you doing that?

**Charles** What am I doing?

**Monica** Why are you holding your head in your hands?

**Charles** Because I've lost my honor. I've lost my personal integrity.

**Monica** Don't sit with your head in your hands.

**Charles** I'm trapped.

**Monica** Don't stay stupid things. You can get up and walk out.

**Charles** I can, but I won't.

**Monica** Fine.

**Charles** Because we have to have a meeting.

**Monica** What kind of a meeting?

**Charles** A meeting at the school.

**Monica** It's alright with me.

**Charles** Okay, good.

**Monica** Let's have a meeting.

**Charles** It'll be us and the school psychologist, a Mrs. Williams, and Laura.

**Monica** Laura, too?

**Charles** Definitely Laura.

**Monica** That's fine with me.

**Charles** Okay, good.  
*Cut to: Gloria speaking with Gary.*

**Gloria** I feel desperate about this, Gary, I feel hysterical.  
*(Pause)* I think he should stay with his mother now, until we work this thing out.

**Gary** No.

**Gloria** I want him to stay with me.

**Gary** No.

**Gloria** First he goes into a program and then he stays with me.

**Gary** Marcia loves him.

**Gloria** It's nothing against Marcia.

**Gary** Then why?

**Gloria** Because you're too much in your own world, Gary. Too much Gary. And you have too many problems, and I'm terrified. Do you understand me? At last?

**Gary** No. What do you mean my world? You mean the theatre world? You mean actors?

**Gloria** I mean the world in your head, Gary. What else could I mean? I mean the self-centeredness, the self-involvement, the imagination. The phony vulnerability. Your wily, sly, cunning, manipulative ways—but you can't hear me, you never hear me, so what good is it my telling you this? Just send Danny to me! I want Danny

to stay with his mother until we straighten this thing out! Okay? You got that?

*Close on Gary.*

*He feels like everything has happened before. He feels helpless. He feels battered by his own Fate. He feels pushed by implacable Time. He almost loves that.*

*He falls forward.*

*Gary knocks on Rondell's door.*

**Rondell** Who is it?

**Gary** It's Gary! Danny's father, Gary!

**Rondell** Oh, Gary. What do you want, Gary?

**Gary** I just want to talk to you!

**Rondell** What about?

**Gary** My son!

**Rondell** Okay, talk.

**Gary** Let me in!

**Rondell** Why?

**Gary** I don't want to shout!

**Rondell** You can't come in now!

**Gary** Let me in!

**Rondell** I got company now!

**Gary** Danny?

**Rondell** No, he's not here!

**Gary** Where is he?

**Rondell** I don't know where he is!

**Gary** Okay, I'll call the police!

**Rondell** Fuck it, come in.

**Gary** Thank you.

**Rondell** Fuck it. I don't know where your stupid son is.

**Gary** I thought you had company.  
**Rondell** I don't have company.  
**Gary** What do you do? You get high and watch porno films?  
*It's the lowest of the low, the belly of the beast.*  
**Rondell** Fuck you if you don't like it.  
**Gary** I don't care what you do.  
**Rondell** You don't look good. You look like you're outside too much.  
**Gary** What's that supposed to mean?  
**Rondell** Wears you down. Next thing you know, you're living in a box.  
**Gary** A box?  
**Rondell** A cardboard box.  
**Gary** Listen, I came to tell you.  
**Rondell** Yeah, yeah.  
**Gary** Leave my kid alone.  
**Rondell** I don't bother him, he don't bother me.  
**Gary** I'm telling ya.  
**Rondell** You an alcoholic? You go to meetings? You got that look.  
**Gary** I'm not gonna say it twice.  
**Rondell** You can say it nine times if you want.  
**Gary** And then I'll do what I have to.  
**Rondell** It's a short ride, you know, from the street to the box.  
**Gary** His mother and I.  
**Rondell** Downhill all the way.  
**Gary** You hear what I say?  
**Rondell** You should know that if you go to your meetings.  
**Gary** So I'll leave it at that.  
**Rondell** You've heard all the stories, I'm sure.  
**Gary** I'll leave it at that.

**Rondell** Gotcha, pal.  
**Gary** Okay.  
*Exit Gary. He feels a little stupid, a little exposed. He stops as he's going through the door so as to reinforce his dignity, but he can't look back. He can't look Rondell in the eye. Rondell smiles. Gary closes the door behind him. A pause, then Laura appears wearing a pink negligee.*  
**Rondell** You look great, kid. You look absolutely fabulous. *And she does. Cut to: Danny Boy and his stepmother, Marcia.*  
**Dan** I never did use needles and shit, I never shot up, I only snorted.  
**Marcia** Doesn't matter, Dan. It's an addiction.  
**Dan** I know. I don't want to do anything stupid.  
**Marcia** I know you don't.  
**Dan** I mean, I do, but I won't do it. That's it.  
**Marcia** Good. We're with you. We're behind you.  
**Dan** I can't waste my life.  
**Marcia** I think it's better if you stay with your mom.  
**Dan** You do?  
**Marcia** I really do.  
*They're in the park, downtown.*  
**Marcia** You're a great kid, Danny.  
**Dan** I still have no profession.  
**Marcia** I know.  
**Dan** But I'm thinkiing of taking classes again.  
**Marcia** Acting?  
**Dan** Yeah.  
**Marcia** I think you're a good actor.

**Dan** But I don't know.

**Marcia** With your dad?

**Dan** No, not with him. He's too radical. I need something, you know, more commercial. My dad's too serious.

**Marcia** Sounds good to me, Dan.

**Dan** So I'll be seeing you for dinners and stuff.

**Marcia** Sounds fine with me.

**Dan** I'll call you.

**Marcia** Okay, Danny!

Cross fade to: Mrs. Williams.

**Mrs. Williams** She watches him as he runs across the park, over the autumn leaves. He looks young and fresh and he knows how to run. She notices herself noticing that. And then she feels sad.

**Monica** About what? What is she sad about?

**Mrs. Williams** Because she feels time, she feels the passing of time. And then she looks around and everything looks dirty, and nobody cares.

**Charles** Time was we had a sense of fellowship.

**Monica** When was that, dear?

**Charles** While I was growing up. Wasn't that long ago, either. You could crack jokes and kid around in those days. There was more a sense of fun, more a sense of adventure and experiment, it seems to me.

**Monica** For the boys, maybe. Not so much for the girls.

**Charles** Girls, too.

**Monica** You don't know.

**Mrs. Williams** Excuse me, is Laura aware of our appointment?

**Monica** I think she is.

**Charles** She ought to be. I definitely told her. I told her at least twice.

**Mrs. Williams** That's fine.

**Charles** She's late a lot.

**Monica** She's always late.

**Mrs. Williams** All right. We'll wait.

**Monica** Did you tell her?

**Mrs. Williams** Yes, of course.

**Charles** Then she's on her way.

**Monica** Maybe she is and maybe she isn't.

**Mrs. Williams** I'm reluctant to start without her.

**Monica** Don't start.

**Mrs. Williams** All right.

**Charles** We didn't have counselors. There was a problem, we went to the principal.

**Mrs. Williams** I'd like to tell you, she's the brightest kid in her class, Laura, maybe the smartest kid in the whole school.

**Monica** Then what's wrong with her?

**Charles** She's angry, she's pissed off.

**Mrs. Williams** Why is she so angry? Excuse me, but do you know?

**Charles** I don't know.

**Monica** I've never known why that girl is so angry.

**Mrs. Williams** How is it in the home?

**Charles** How?

**Mrs. Williams** What's the atmosphere like?

**Charles** Normal.

**Monica** It's perfectly normal.

**Mrs. Williams** There aren't problems?

**Charles** Well, there are definitely problems.

**Mrs. Williams** I see.

**Monica** Normal problems. Problems of discipline, of doing one's chores, things like that. School work. And she's mature beyond her age.

**Charles** I don't understand lateness. What is that? When a person is always late?

**Mrs. Williams** I'm not sure I have an answer.

**Charles** That's definitely one of her problems. Lateness and turmoil.

**Mrs. Williams** Turmoil?

**Charles** Disorder. Disorganization. Like she doesn't put away her stuff. She doesn't clean up her room. And she's adamant. And she gets angry if you bring it up.

**Monica** I'll say. And she lies.

**Mrs. Williams** Could be a control thing.

**Charles** What's that?

**Mrs. Williams** Like she's in charge.

**Charles** She's always in charge.

**Mrs. Williams** That's right.

**Charles** Always.

**Monica** Not with me she isn't.

**Charles** That's why you fight.

**Monica** She walks all over you.

**Charles** True.

**Mrs. Williams** Drugs?

**Monica** I think she takes drugs.

**Charles** I don't.

**Monica** Why shouldn't she? You do.

**Charles** Meds.

**Monica** You take your meds, your Vioxx and your Zantac and your antidepressant.

**Charles** It's true, I do take those.

**Monica** And you drank. You had your little vodka tonic while you watched your stupid sports.

**Charles** True. I did do that.

**Monica** So why shouldn't she take drugs?

**Charles** It's all my fault.

**Mrs. Williams** What does she take? Do you know?

**Monica** I think she's high on something most of the time.

**Charles** I don't know about that.

**Monica** I don't know what.

**Mrs. Williams** If she is, we'll have to do something about it, obviously.

**Monica** And she's got this boy thing.

**Mrs. Williams** What's the boy thing?

**Charles** This is news to me.

**Monica** She's too interested in sex.

**Charles** That's not what I hear.

**Monica** She wouldn't tell you about it.

**Charles** What I hear is she hates boys, because they're stupid and rude.

**Monica** Well, she likes something about them.

**Mrs. Williams** She's a beautiful girl.

**Charles** She definitely is.

**Mrs. Williams** She gets a lot of attention.

**Charles** She definitely does.

**Mrs. Williams** You'd have to have a little substance to be able to deal with that.

**Charles** What do you mean?

**Mrs. Williams** Well, what is she, she's seventeen?

**Charles** Yes.

**Mrs. Williams** So she's getting a massive amount of attention.

**Monica** We know that. She's a teenager.

**Mrs. Williams** So you'd have to have some inner discipline.

**Monica** Absolutely.

**Mrs. Williams** Which it doesn't look like she has, despite the fact that she's so bright.

**Monica** I don't know what to do about it.

**Charles** I don't either.

**Mrs. Williams** Looks like she's not going to show.

**Monica** And it's not the school, it's her.

**Charles** I wasn't going to blame the school.

**Mrs. Williams** We're not perfect.

**Charles** I think it's the whole entire culture, where everybody is lying to you all the time.

**Mrs. Williams** You have a point there.

**Charles** Continuously. Everywhere.

**Monica** Kind of puts us in an awkward position.

**Charles** Don't worry about it.

**Monica** I think she is getting that attitude from you.

**Charles** What attitude?

**Monica** Hopeless despair, I think it's called.

**Charles** You're a tough woman.

**Mrs. Williams** Excuse me, but what should we do? Laura's not showing up. Should we make another appointment?

**Monica** I don't know.

**Charles** Where is she? I wonder.  
*Back to Gary. He's found Danny Boy finally on his favorite bench in the park, sun going down in the Western sky, pink and dark blue.*  
*It's the heavens.*

*Gary thinks.*

*It's the heavens above.*

*Act break here.*

**Gary** How are you, Son?

**Dan** I'm cool, Dad.

**Gary** Nice sky.

**Dan** Beautiful. Pink.

**Gary** How's your girlfriend?

**Dan** I haven't seen her lately, Dad.

**Gary** Why not?

**Dan** I just haven't. She's busy.

**Gary** I quit drinking you know, when I was with your mother.

**Dan** I know that.

**Gary** Haven't touched the sauce.

**Dan** I know.

**Gary** I take a few pills but otherwise, I'm clean.

**Dan** That's good, Dad.

**Gary** I sit quietly in the morning and I pray to God.

**Dan** What do you say?

**Gary** I say the Lord's Prayer. Give us this day... I say Lord have mercy.

**Dan** Some people do that.

**Gary** I met a girl on that bench right over there, said I had to be saved immediately.

**Dan** What did you do?

**Gary** I told her I was a Buddhist. But she was right, you know, we have to be saved.

**Dan** I don't know what that means.

**Gary** Over and over again.

**Dan** And then we die.

**Gary** Right, so make the most of what you got.

**Dan** Rondell says it has no meaning at all.

**Gary** Rondell?

**Dan** My friend, Rondell.

**Gary** That man should be shot.

**Dan** Take it easy, Dad. He was a ranger in Vietnam, Rondell.

**Gary** Who cares? He should be put up against a wall and executed. And I think I'll be the one who does it.

**Dan** He thinks like you do, Dad.

**Gary** How could that possibly be?

**Dan** He doesn't want me to use. He says I shouldn't use.

**Gary** Well, that's interesting.

**Dan** He says there's a biology to everything. DNA.

**Gary** How would he know?

**Dan** He's very factual.

**Gary** Oh, for Christ's sake, Danny.

**Dan** He says some people have to kill and some people have to be junkies.

**Gary** Kill?

**Dan** You know, like in wars.

**Gary** You don't have to be a junkie, Dan.

**Dan** I know I don't.

**Gary** It's not you. It's not your DNA, whatever this guy Rondell thinks.

**Dan** He agrees with you, it's what he thinks, too.

**Gary** Can I meet this guy?

**Dan** Sure, Dad.

*So that's how Gary went down to Rondell's place, which we have already seen. Cut back to: Laura, on the street, where she's talking to her friend, Rena. Street noises.*

**Laura** Yeah, so I missed the appointment. I miss a lot of appointments.

**Rena** I miss a few.

**Laura** Who cares? It's all about the money.

**Rena** I'm sure they care.

**Laura** Sure, about themselves.

**Rena** There must be good people around.

**Laura** Sure, if you have nine billion people, there must be fifty who give a shit.

**Rena** It's not nine billion.

**Laura** Whatever.

**Rena** Don't exaggerate, don't extrapolate.

**Laura** Who says that?

**Rena** My uncle Dave, he's a Buddhist.

**Laura** At least he sounds intelligent.

**Rena** He's very intelligent.

**Laura** Who's that?

**Rena** Who?

**Laura** Him.

**Rena** I don't know, I'm sure.

**Laura** He's staring.

**Rena** Let him stare.

**Laura** He's coming over.

**Rena** Oh, no.

**Laura** He's dressed nice.

**Rena** He's evil.

**Laura** You don't know.  
**Antonio** Hi, there.  
**Laura** Hi.  
**Rena** Don't talk to him.  
**Antonio** You girls should be in school.  
**Laura** We should, but we're not.  
**Antonio** I can see that.  
**Laura** Yeah.  
**Antonio** You looking for something? What are you looking for out here?  
**Rena** Not you, amigo.  
**Antonio** Because you will find it.  
**Laura** Really?  
**Antonio** *Sí, claro*, it's the tragic mystery of life.  
**Rena** He's a fuckin' poet.  
**Antonio** Come with me, and I'll get you everything you want *Todo*.  
**Rena** Don't do it.  
**Antonio** Whatever you want.  
**Laura** I want to know what happens. I want to know, in advance, everything that happens. I want complete control. Complete and absolute control. Can you do that?  
**Antonio** *Si, claro*.  
**Rena** Oh, horseshit.  
**Antonio** *Ven' conmigo*.  
**Laura** I can't right now.  
**Rena** Like, never, okay?  
**Antonio** Let me give you my card.  
**Laura** What for?

**Antonio** You're a beautiful girl. You should have what you want. Here, take it.  
**Rena** Get lost.  
**Antonio** Give me a call when you're ready for what you want. I have my cell, I keep it on at all times.  
*Fade to: Gary stumbles into Antonio in the park. Park noises off.*  
**Gary** Excuse me, I'm sorry.  
**Antonio** Get out of my way, fucking *idiota!*  
**Gary** I said I was sorry.  
**Antonio** Step aside.  
**Gary** Do I know you? I think I know you.  
**Antonio** No.  
**Gary** Where do I know you from?  
**Antonio** I have no idea.  
**Gary** Rondell's. You're a friend of Rondell's, My name is Gary, Danny's father.  
**Antonio** Oh. Okay. *Muy bien. Mucho gusto*.  
**Gary** You remember me?  
**Antonio** Not really, no.  
**Gary** You don't recognize me?  
**Antonio** I can't tell one stupid gringo from another, so get out of my way.  
**Gary** You know my son, though, don't you?  
**Antonio** Let go of my arm.  
**Gary** Antonio, right?  
**Antonio** Let go.  
**Gary** Your name's Antonio.  
**Antonio** That's right. *Que quiere usted, gringo?* So what do you want?

**Gary** Don't sell any more dope to my son.  
**Antonio** I don't sell no stinking dope to nobody.  
**Gary** You don't?  
**Antonio** No. Don't say bad things. I want to get off the street, live a nice life, a nice American life, with education and a little music, and a living room and a dining room. That's all I want, a few square feet of peace and quiet.  
**Gary** Really?  
**Antonio** Yeah, so leave me alone.  
**Gary** *(Menacingly)* I'll leave you alone!  
**Antonio** Touch me and I'll kill you, motherfucker. Back off. *Gary stops. Antonio walks. Gary sobs. His life's been spared. Fade as Gary runs into Charles quite by accident. At a meeting.*  
**Charles** Can I join you?  
**Gary** Sure.  
**Charles** We're the only smokers left, looks like.  
**Gary** Yeah, I'm gonna quit, myself  
**Charles** Yeah, I do it all the time.  
**Gary** Ha, ha.  
**Charles** I liked your pitch.  
**Gary** Thank you.  
**Charles** Sorry about your son.  
**Gary** I think he'll be all right.  
**Charles** Good. Name's Charles.  
**Gary** Glad to meet you, Charles. Gary. You have kids?  
**Charles** I have a daughter.  
**Gary** How is she?  
**Charles** She's beautiful. A beauty.

**Gary** How old?  
**Charles** Seventeen. She's seventeen.  
**Gary** It's hard, it's a hard age.  
**Charles** I agree with that. How old's your Danny Boy?  
**Gary** Danny's in his twenties, actually. He's 26.  
**Charles** Oh. What's he do?  
**Gary** He's an actor, like his dad.  
**Charles** No kidding!  
**Gary** No.  
**Charles** Have you... What have you...? Is he...?  
*But of course Gary has turned away because he always turns away from these questions of what movies has he been in and where would he have been seen on TV and so on, and so on, because in fact he's not in anything and neither is his boy.*  
**Charles** It's a rough business.  
*Says Charles politely.*  
**Gary** Yes, it is.  
*Gary's on the verge of tears so he drags on his cigarette and chokes.*  
**Gary** Excuse me.  
*So then he has to run away to the water fountain. Charles looks up at the moon and remembers that he is a recovering alcoholic and that life is difficult and strange. As Laura meets Antonio in Echo Park.*  
**Antonio** People fish here.  
**Laura** Really? Do they catch anything?  
**Antonio** No, I don't think so.  
**Laura** Then what are they doing?

**Antonio** They like to fish. Throw the thing on the water.  
*Una cosa.* Wait for a thrill.

**Laura** I want to get out of my house, get away from my family, get my own place.

**Antonio** So? Who cares?

**Laura** Nobody.

**Antonio** *Eso es.*

**Laura** I guess I could get a job.

**Antonio** I told you, a beautiful white girl, you can have anything you want.

**Laura** I want a different life.

**Antonio** See, they just like to sit there, get off their minds.

**Laura** Which I'm sure is not too possible. And you? What do you do?

**Antonio** Me, I'm like the devil, I bring people together with their temptations. That's why you called me.

**Laura** You make a living?

**Antonio** Definitely. You will pay me.

**Laura** I haven't agreed to anything yet.

**Antonio** I'm not a pimp, but I know people. People in the Valley, they make sex films, porno. They would love you there. But you have to be eighteen. Are you eighteen?

**Laura** I'm eighteen.

**Antonio** There you go then.  
*He walks. Here's Rena. Interior Day.*

**Rena** There's so much hypocrisy. It's so totally boring. You know they got one commercial they're joking about the size of a guy's thingamabob.

**Laura** Small.

**Rena** Small is right. It must be totally pathetic and they're like brutes anyway. I mean. Small or big they're gonna kick ass. And there's the girls. You see that? You see these girls in the army, they can't wait to kick butt.

**Laura** I feel sorry for them.

**Rena** I don't.

**Laura** They don't know what they're doing. What else are they gonna do? At least they're useful, like on a ship or a plane.

**Rena** Ships and planes.

**Laura** Ships and planes and tanks and whatever. At least they're doing something useful. What else are they capable of?

**Rena** Not much.

**Laura** Well, they're trained for it, so they got to do it sooner or later. It's so amazingly pathetic.

**Rena** You don't see any hope?

**Laura** Hope for what?

**Rena** Hope for the future.

**Laura** No. Not unless four billion people die in a hurry and they attach another brain to us so we can think straight.

**Rena** They might do that. I could see that, like with a micro-chip in the brain, you don't have to even see reality.

**Laura** That's not what I mean.

**Rena** Sorry.

**Laura** That wasn't what I meant at all.

**Rena** Okay.

**Laura** It's so disheartening.

**Rena** What did you mean? You mean me?

**Laura** Obviously, we need something to make us more intelligent, not less intelligent.

**Rena** Maybe we could go to another planet.

**Laura** Yeah, that'll do it. Great idea, Rena.

**Rena** Well, I'm only saying.

**Laura** Don't start crying. Rena? Stop crying. I didn't mean you, I meant the whole ball of wax, the whole enchilada, okay? Stop crying.

**Rena** What are you going to do, Laura? What are you going to do?

**Laura** Good question, honey. But I don't like life very much, and I don't like my chances.

**Rena** Wait till you get older and have a family of your own.

**Laura** I don't want to have a family of my own.

**Rena** Why not?

**Laura** There are too many people in this world already.

**Rena** Don't start with the drugs.

**Laura** Come on, we been using drugs since we were twelve.

**Rena** Yeah, but I mean.

**Laura** The whole country is demented with drugs. Stupefied and fat.

**Rena** You know what I mean.

**Laura** Whatever works.

**Rena** That Spanish guy is no good. Antonio. They hate white people, they have a deep resentment.

**Laura** Can you blame them?

**Rena** Yeah, let 'em go back to Mexico or wherever.

**Laura** Nobody knows what's gonna happen next, Rena. The whole thing's out of control.

**Rena** Who told you that?

**Laura** A guy I know named Rondell.

**Rena** Rondell? That's a stupid name.

**Laura** I know it is.

**Rena** But what do you think, as a person?

**Laura** I guess a person could have their satisfactions, they could have their pleasures, but a person is always wrong, no matter what they do or say, they're wrong, because they're a very limited type of creature who can only think one way. They think about themselves and then they think about themselves and the whole universe is a projection of themselves.

**Rena** No hope.

**Laura** No. And don't start crying about it.

**Rena** I'm not crying. Do I look like I'm crying?

**Laura** I'll see you, Rena.

**Rena** Where you going?

**Laura** I have an appointment. I'm an hour late already.

**Rena** I'll come over, okay?

**Laura** Sure, Rena, come over...  
*Interior. Day.*

**Monica** Where you been?

**Laura** Out.

**Monica** What do mean out?

**Laura** Out means out.

**Monica** You better talk straight to me you little bitch or the ride is over.

**Laura** It's over anyway, so fuck off.

**Monica** If it wasn't for your father, I'd have you locked up.

**Laura** Where is he? Where's Dad?

**Monica** I don't know.

**Laura** Why don't you know?

**Monica** Don't you dare interrogate me.

**Laura** You drove him out of the house with your tyrannical ways.

**Monica** Smart ass.

**Laura** It's true. I'm the smartest person around here by a long shot. A lot of good that'll do me.

**Monica** What's that?

**Laura** I said, a lot of good that'll do me.

**Monica** Because you're too damn conceited.

**Laura** Come on down and say that. Come on down.

**Monica** I'm coming!

**Laura** Come on!

**Monica** I'm not afraid of you!

**Laura** Come on down!  
*A pause, then she walks out and slams the door.*  
*Cut to: Rondell's place.*

**Rondell** You take a lot of dope?

**Laura** Since I was eleven. I've taken every kind of dope you can think of. Acid, coke, grass, hashish, mescaline, LSD, amphetemine, methadrine, heroin, Xanax, methadone, Halcyon, Zantac, alcohol—

**Rondell** Sex?

**Laura** Since I was eleven.

**Rondell** Jeez, that's worse than me even.

**Laura** When did you start?

**Rondell** I was a teenager.

**Laura** What do you do, actually?

**Rondell** I'm a junkie, an addict.

**Laura** No, I mean how do you keep yourself going?

**Rondell** I move stuff, buy weight and break it up, make enough to use and a small profit. I bring people together, take a percentage. I'm like an agent.

**Laura** What'd you do before?

**Rondell** I was in the army. I was in 'Nam. That's where I first used. You realize pretty quick the whole thing's stupid. Freedom and democracy. They's just code words for moneymaking. Means fuck you, give me the money.

**Laura** I agree with that. I wish there was one thing in this world that isn't done for money.

**Rondell** You could try AA.

**Laura** I'm not an alcoholic. And anyway, I'm still a teenager.

**Rondell** You could try the church.

**Laura** I'm not a believer. And that's all they do.

**Rondell** What's that?

**Laura** Believe.

**Rondell** How about school?

**Laura** It's all in code, just like you say. They're bullshitting, saying stuff to scare you, make you comply, buy their shit.

**Rondell** Well, there ain't nothin' out here, I can tell you that. I'd think it all over some more if I was you.

**Laura** Okay, thanks.  
*Back to Rena's house.*

**Laura** Yeah, I talked to this guy and he's an honest guy for a dope addict.

**Rena** I wouldn't be so sure.

**Laura** Army guy, actually.

**Rena** So?

**Laura** He was in Vietnam.

**Rena** Most people don't even know where that is.

**Laura** Do you?  
**Rena** No, actually. (*Laughter*)  
**Laura** You ever do it with two?  
**Rena** For real?  
**Laura** Yeah, for real.  
**Rena** Almost.  
**Laura** Did you like it?  
**Rena** I almost liked it. Why?  
**Laura** I think I'd like it.  
**Rena** Why?  
**Laura** No reason, I'm only asking.  
**Rena** Nasty.  
**Laura** I don't know what's right.  
**Rena** You shouldn't do sex for fun.  
**Laura** Why not?  
**Rena** Because you want to be treated like a person, I would think.  
**Laura** Yeah.  
**Rena** I wouldn't want to be a slut, I don't think.  
**Laura** No.  
**Rena** I think I'll get married.  
**Laura** Take your time, Rena.  
**Rena** You got to watch that.  
**Laura** I been having counselors for years, you know.  
**Rena** Uh—huh.  
**Laura** Say I'm self-destructive, antisocial, obsessive-compulsive, manic-depressive, paranoid and masochistic.  
**Rena** Me, I'm neurotic.  
**Laura** That's normal. Say I fight with my mother because I want to get with my father.

**Rena** Oh, horseshit.  
**Laura** I feel like I *am* my mother, actually.  
**Rena** It's a bunch of horseshit.  
**Laura** It's a money trap, for hustlers and their marks.  
**Rena** There you go.  
**Laura** Am I being paranoid?  
**Rena** Not to me you're not.  
**Laura** God, it's so confusing.  
*The office of Dr. Jones. Interior. Day.*  
**Dr. Jones** How are you, Laura?  
**Laura** Confused.  
**Dr. Jones** Tell me why.  
**Laura** We keep going around in circles. We're not going anywhere.  
*(Silence)*  
You're not going to say anything?  
**Dr. Jones** What do you want me to say?  
**Laura** Something from your own real self.  
**Dr. Jones** I'm very glad to see you.  
**Laura** I got other things to do, you know.  
**Dr. Jones** Of course you do. How are things at home?  
**Laura** The same as the same. My mother is angry and my father is absent.  
**Dr. Jones** Where is your father?  
**Laura** He's going to AA meetings now, says he's discovered the real America.  
**Dr. Jones** Oh. What do you think?  
**Laura** I think the real America is out of its mind. Like me.  
**Dr. Jones** Are you out of your mind?  
**Laura** Come on, Dr. Jones. don't ask me shit like that.

**Dr. Jones** Oh. Sorry.  
*(Pause)*

**Laura** Are you waiting for me to say something?

**Dr. Jones** What is the real America?

**Laura** The real America is the Destroyer of Souls.  
*(Pause)*  
Are you waiting for me to say something again?

**Dr. Jones** That sounded religious.

**Laura** They're always talking about God. It's a code word for power. And then there's Jesus Christ. You got to get Jesus. Another code. For self-righteousness. You got all these self-righteous Christians sitting around planning the destruction of the earth. It's very depressing, very depressing.

**Dr. Jones** Are you getting any benefit from the Wellbutrin?

**Laura** I'm taking Zoloft, not Wellbutrin. Jesus.  
*Dr. Jones recovers quickly.*

**Dr. Jones** Are you?

**Laura** No, not enough. Not enough benefit. I think I need something. Something more, something stronger, something that works. Something that'll work, finally.

**Dr. Jones** Wait a minute.  
*Dr. Jones steps out of his office. He goes into the waiting room pretending to himself that he is looking for his next patient. No. No one there. He sees the room through Laura's eyes.*

**Laura** Stupid room. You press a button and the name lights up and you wait. Doctors' time is extra valuable, more valuable than ours. Then he comes out of the inner sanctum to get—you. Especially you.

*Fuck this shit. This sucks.*

**Dr. Jones** I didn't know what drug she was on. I got the wrong drug. She's blindsided herself, she's trapped in her protest. I really can't do anything about it. I don't know what's driving me, I don't know who's standing here in my shoes, I don't know what I'm doing, I'm tired.  
*He rubs his forehead self-consciously—as though someone were watching him—takes a breath, absolves himself, ah what the fuck, and goes back inside.*

**Dr. Jones** What's up, Laura?  
*He asks.*

**Laura** I binged.

**Dr. Jones** Oh.

**Laura** You know, it's too much.

**Dr. Jones** I have about five minutes.

**Laura** I overdid it.

**Dr. Jones** What?

**Laura** Sex.

**Dr. Jones** Laura. Did you...?

**Laura** I took precautions, I took precautions. Is it okay for me to tell you this shit?

**Dr. Jones** Of course it is.

**Laura** You're not gonna tell on me?

**Dr. Jones** Of course not.

**Laura** Not my parents?

**Dr. Jones** No.

**Laura** Not the school?

**Dr. Jones** No.

**Laura** Not the police?

**Dr. Jones** Why the police?

**Laura** Yes or no?  
**Dr. Jones** No.  
**Laura** Okay.  
**Dr. Jones** But you can't put me in a bad spot.  
**Laura** I took a bunch of amphetimine. You know, and it makes you want to fuck your brains out. So I did.  
**Dr. Jones** Don't tell me any names.  
**Laura** I wasn't going to.  
**Dr. Jones** Now what, Laura?  
**Laura** I don't know. Next time I'll drink instead. That's what my mother does. Don't say I told you.  
**Dr. Jones** I have to talk to your mother.  
**Laura** I'm just saying.  
**Dr. Jones** What?  
**Laura** She's a foody.  
**Dr. Jones** What does that mean?  
**Laura** She's like, hungry. Hungry, hungry. She's hungry all the time. So then she fasts for a while and then she gives my father a hard time.  
**Dr. Jones** Did you just make all that up?  
**Laura** No. Maybe.  
**Dr. Jones** Let's get back to you, Laura.  
**Laura** With crank you don't feel like eating, but you could get turned on.  
**Dr. Jones** You have to stop. Period.  
**Laura** Yeah. Big time.  
**Dr. Jones** I'm serious, Laura.  
**Laura** She can't satisfy her thirst so she turns on him.  
**Dr. Jones** I'm talking to you, Laura.  
**Laura** She makes him crawl.

**Dr. Jones** And you?  
**Laura** Me, I don't take no shit from her. Not anymore.  
*(Suddenly breaks into tears)*  
**Dr. Jones** Oh, Laura, honey. You got to stop all this. Just stop.  
**Laura** No, I never will. Never!  
*Close on Laura as she cries. Cut to: Rena's place. Interior Day.*  
**Rena** So, you still gonna move out?  
**Laura** You bet. Definitely. It's the biggest fucking industry in the world, you know.  
**Rena** What?  
**Laura** Drugs, Rena. Very big. And I want to have some fucking pleasure in my life.  
**Rena** I can hear that.  
**Laura** Pleasure is an attribute of Paradise. Did you know?  
**Rena** No.  
**Laura** According to my Mom. So you have to pay for it, of course. Up to your eyebrows in shit.  
*Hold on Laura, then back home again, with Charles.*  
**Charles** You can talk to me, honey.  
**Laura** No, I can't.  
**Charles** Why not?  
**Laura** You're drunk.  
**Charles** I been sober eighteen months.  
**Laura** You're drunk, anyway.  
**Charles** No, I'm not.  
**Laura** Anyway, you always listen to her.  
**Charles** I listen to you.  
**Laura** No, you always take her side.

**Charles** I do?

**Laura** You know you do. Why lie about it? You know you do and then you squirm.

**Charles** I'm not going to try and bullshit you, Laura.

**Laura** Good, Dad.

**Charles** I'm not going to lie.

**Laura** Good. Don't start crying about it.

**Charles** I'm not.

**Laura** And I don't understand why you cave the way you do.

**Charles** It's no use arguing. Makes everything worse.

**Laura** You're timid.

**Charles** Not all the time. Sometimes I am. Other situations, other people, I'm not timid at all.

**Laura** Not me. I'm not timid.

**Charles** You're shy.

**Laura** I'm not shy.

**Charles** I thought you were shy.

**Laura** I'm not.

**Charles** You don't speak up at school.

**Laura** What can you say in that stupid sinkhole?

**Charles** You have to do well in school.

**Laura** Why?

**Charles** Because it's tough out there, it's harsh.

**Laura** Well, that's true, Dad.

**Charles** You have to make the grade. Are you still seeing your counselor?

**Laura** Yeah, I am.

**Charles** Mrs. Williams. She's nice.

**Laura** Yeah, she is.

**Charles** Well, that's good.

**Laura** What does Mom think?

**Charles** You know what she thinks.

**Laura** She's hard on me.

**Charles** She has your interests at heart. She wants what's best for you. She just turned out to be more the authority, the disciplinarian.

**Laura** I wish it was more you.

**Charles** I just don't have the temperament for it.

**Laura** Yeah, Dad.

**Charles** It's because of the way I grew up.

**Laura** Your mother wasn't nice to you.

**Charles** No. You've heard it all before, haven't you?

**Laura** Yeah, Dad.

**Charles** So I tend to withdraw.

**Laura** I'm sorry.

**Charles** That's okay.

**Laura** I'm telling you in advance.

**Charles** What?

**Laura** That I'm sorry.

**Charles** Sorry for what?

**Laura** Just sorry, Dad. Sorry, sorry, sorry.

*Cut to: Rondell's place.*

**Rondell** You thought it over, girl?

**Laura** Not exactly.

**Rondell** What you want here, then?

**Laura** I'd like a shot.

**Rondell** Can you pay?

**Laura** I'll work it off.

**Rondell** Pardon?

**Laura** You can trick me for it.

**Rondell** I'm not interested, personally.

**Laura** You're not?

**Rondell** No.

**Laura** That's unusual. Are you gay?

**Rondell** No. I'm an addict monk.

**Laura** Really?

**Rondell** I'm abstemious.

**Laura** Nice.

**Rondell** I abstain.

**Laura** I got it.

**Rondell** Just dope and business. But I'll talk to my partner, Antonio, if you're down.

**Laura** Where would it be?

**Rondell** Where would what be?

**Laura** My fix?

**Rondell** Right here if you want.

**Laura** Yes. And can you do it?

**Rondell** Sure.

**Laura** I can't do it myself.

**Rondell** My man will set you up with some dates.

**Laura** I'll need a place to stay.

**Rondell** That's on you.

**Laura** And some money. I'm young and I'm good.

**Rondell** You can talk it over with Antonio. But I'll tell you, there's competition.

**Laura** There's none as young or as good as me, I know that.

**Rondell** I'm sure he'll be flexible.

**Laura** And one other thing. If I OD, don't bring me back.

**Rondell** Say again?

**Laura** You heard me. I'm asking you as a friend.

**Rondell** Go home, Laura.

**Laura** No.

**Rondell** Go home and think some more. I ain't nobody's friend. *Exterior Day. At a meeting: Laura, Dan, Gary, and Charles. They end up standing next to each other with the smokers. Charles lights up.*

**Charles** Smoke?

**Gary** No, thank you.

**Charles** You look familiar.

**Gary** Sure, we met, couple weeks ago, right here. Name's Gary.

**Charles** Right, Charles. This is my daughter, Laura. She's seventeen.

**Laura** *(Embarrassed)* Dad.

**Charles** What's up?

**Laura** Nothing, Dad. You don't have to tell them my age.

**Charles** Sorry.

**Gary** This here is Dan.

**Charles** Hi, Dan.

**Dan** Hi.

**Laura** Hi.

**Dan** Hi.

**Antonio** And so they looked at each other, into each other's eyes, the two young people, los Jovenes, the isolated and the damned, the soon to be vanished from earth, los Desparecidos.

**Gary** I got eighteen months. My boy here's got eleven days.

**Marcia** To live?

**Gloria** No. Don't say things like that. Don't even think it.

**Charles** Congratulations. Laura?

**Laura** What?

**Dan** Thank you.

**Laura** Great.

**Charles** Me, it's a couple of years.

**Gary** You in college?

**Laura** No.

**Charles** She's a senior in high school.

**Dan** Oh, cool.

**Laura** What do you mean?

**Dan** Nothing. Just cool.  
*He stopped breathing right there, for a moment, our Danny Boy.*

**Gary** Great, that's a nice time, high school.

**Laura** Yeah, it is.

**Gary** What did you think of the meeting?

**Laura** It was okay. It was fine.

**Gary** I didn't hear what you said.

**Laura** When? Just now?

**Gary** No, at the meeting.

**Laura** I didn't speak at the meeting.

**Gary** Oh, sorry.

**Laura** That was the girl behind me.

**Dan** That wasn't her, Dad.

**Gary** I understand.

**Charles** This was her—Laura's—first meeting.

**Gary** Well, I hope you keep on coming back, Laura.

**Laura** Why?

**Gary** Be good for you, that's why.

**Laura** Let's go, Dad.

**Gary** Might save your life.

**Charles** Nice to see you again.  
*Exits with Laura.*

**Dan** So that's how I met Laura. I'd forgotten that. I had met her, Laura, outside a meeting, and forgot about it, and then I saw her on TV, I mean in a movie, having sex in a movie, on a video, but I didn't know it, I had no idea what would happen, that I would be in a room with her and she'd be dead.

**Gary** Or that he himself would be murdered in the park one day, a mile or so away, probably at random, by some idiot *pistolero*.

**Dan** It was incredibly sad.

**Gary** While the American economy rocks on—murderously indifferent to the deaths of these sweet young people—bullets flying in every direction, cars crashing, bombs exploding, sirens wailing, buildings burning, it's a flare-up on the sun and so we're violent and we love it, because it's us.  
*Cut back to: Laura's house. Interior. Day.*

**Monica** You think it's interesting now, but you wait, it won't seem so interesting. It'll seem dirty, actually, and strange. Dirty and strange. You mark my words.

**Laura** I don't think so.

**Monica** You don't, eh?

**Laura** No.

**Monica** Little Missie doesn't think so.

**Laura** No.

**Monica** I was an adolescent once myself. Species survival.

**Laura** You're so smart, Mom.

**Monica** You're more like me. You're like me much more than your father.

**Laura** I know that.

**Monica** I did all that stuff in the sixties. I believed there were causes then.

**Laura** What do you think now?

**Monica** Now I think the sun flares and the earth creatures down here get agitated.  
*Moments later: Charles and Monica's house.*  
*Exterior day.*

**Charles** I notice I get paranoid when I hear talk about sexual activities of various kinds.

**Monica** Do you, Charles?

**Charles** I don't know why.

**Monica** I know why.

**Charles** Actually, I do know why. It's because the subject is fraught, fraught with danger.

**Monica** Danger to you?

**Charles** Danger in the human situation.

**Monica** Lies and delusion.

**Charles** Fear, domination, jealousy, rage.

**Monica** And so on.

**Charles** Yes. It's amazing how people manage to keep their sanity.

**Monica** Do they, Charles?

**Charles** Where's Laura?

**Monica** Keep their sanity?

**Charles** Is she at Rena's? Why don't you call over there?

**Monica** You do it, Charles. All right, I'll call.  
*Cut back to Rena's house.*

**Rena** You just have to be patient, and look ahead. Then the next thing you know, you'll be there, like nothing ever happened.

**Laura** True.

**Rena** That's my theory of life.

**Laura** Sounds good.

**Rena** So you're not gonna stay depressed forever, you're not gonna be lonely forever, or they're not gonna be mad at you forever, or whatever.

**Laura** You rhymed.

**Rena** You know?

**Laura** Yes.

**Rena** So you have to stay cool.

**Laura** Yeah.

**Rena** And hang with it.

**Laura** I don't care, really, when you come right down to it.

**Rena** You should care.

**Laura** I know I should, but I don't.

**Rena** You have to, Laura.

**Laura** If I die?

**Rena** What?

**Laura** There'll be one less person, one less body, one less mouth on the earth. I don't think that's so bad. So, I don't care.

**Rena** Why should you die?

**Laura** I mean hypothetically.

**Rena** Hypothetically everybody dies.

**Laura** *(Laughing)* True.

**Rena** You know, so chill.

**Laura** Okay.  
*Phone ring.*

**Rena** I'll bet that's your parents.

**Laura** Don't answer it.  
*Laura stares at the phone. She counts to herself: one, two, three, four. One, two, three, four.*

**Rena** It's probably your parents.  
*One, two, three, four. Rondell's Place. Sound of gunfire in the streets.*

**Dan** Hey? Rondell? Rondell, you in there?

**Rondell** That you, Danny Boy? What up?

**Dan** Open the door!

**Rondell** Come in.

**Dan** Thank you.

**Rondell** Don't be agitated.

**Dan** There's a fucking gang war going on out there, it's a war zone. Bullets flying in every direction. I don't know why I said that or who said it. It sounded just like my father. "Bullets flying in every direction." It's one of his favorite expressions.

**Rondell** You on speed?

**Dan** No. Why?

**Rondell** You're talking fast.

**Dan** You seen many bodies?

**Rondell** You mean dead bodies?

**Dan** You must have, in Vietnam.

**Rondell** I have. I seen more than a few. Corpses and half of corpses and quarter corpses.

**Dan** And?

**Rondell** They're weird. You stare at 'em long enough you think they moved. You should go to a morgue sometime.

**Dan** I don't think so. You ever go out, Rondell?

**Rondell** 'Course I do. I go to Mexico two or three times a month for re-supply. Then I lie very low. What you want?

**Dan** Nothing.

**Rondell** You still clean?

**Dan** Yes. I'm clean and sober. I just need a place to chill.

**Rondell** I'll give you a key, you don't have to bother me with the door.

**Dan** You're a hard man, Rondell.

**Rondell** What's up with your parents?

**Dan** They're doing a lot better.

**Rondell** I'm glad.

**Dan** Both my mother and my stepmother and of course Gary, even though he's been out of work maybe a year now.

**Rondell** Actors.

**Dan** It's the life.

**Rondell** If you all cleaned up why you hanging here?

**Dan** I told you, gunfire in the park.

**Rondell** Go home, kid.

**Dan** Why?

**Rondell** Come back later, or tomorrow. I got someone coming over, she won't want to see you here.  
*Danny Boy senses his own frightened swagger as he slouches through Rondell's door. Then he steps out into the LA night, bullets flying in every direction. Maybe he feels his own death coming at him, a random fly-by, an aimless bullet through the heart.*

*But probably not.*  
*Nor does he know what he'll see when he soon goes back to Rondell's place, jacked up on a bit of speed.*

**Dan** She looked so pale and lonely on the screen, even with that man inside her, and her eyes were so black. Now there was a shrieking in my ears like my blood was pumping through a steam whistle. I tried not to look at her, but her eyes, they were so big and black, so black, like holes. The stars were gone.

*Take a good look at Danny Boy and fade to:*

**Gary** It's so strange, you know, looking out through the eyes, all this complicated machinery.

**Marcia** What is?

**Gary** Well, that's what I'm saying.

**Marcia** What?

**Gary** About life.

**Marcia** What about it? You say all these half-baked things and you expect me to fill in the gaps.

**Gary** Good point.

**Marcia** Okay, try again.

*Pause.*

Don't sulk, Gary.

*Sound of a leaf blower.*

**Gary** Good grief. I can barely stand it. They want revenge, these people, for us stealing California. Anyway, I know this lady, she's a regular at my meeting, she's got maybe forty years. She's a wonderful woman, she always says, don't forget, Gary, there's another reality. There's another reality, hidden, inside of us, that sees all this.

Really. You don't have to take my word for it. You can see for yourself.

**Marcia** I'm just glad about Danny Boy, that he's cleaned up, finally. I feel like I can breathe again.

*Rondell's. Interior Day*

**Laura** Hi.

**Rondell** Come on in, honey. You know Antonio.

**Laura** Hello.

**Antonio** *Buenas.*

**Rondell** How you been? Okay?

**Laura** I feel fine.

**Rondell** You have symptoms?

**Laura** Symptoms?

**Rondell** Withdrawal symptoms.

**Laura** Not really.

**Rondell** She has a great constitution, very unusual.

**Antonio** *Eso es.*

**Rondell** You want to fix?

**Laura** Why I'm here.

**Antonio** Nice to see you.

**Laura** Thanks.

**Antonio** You look great on the TV. *Fabuloso.*

**Laura** Yeah.

**Antonio** You have a good time?

**Laura** It's okay.

**Antonio** Bravo.

**Rondell** She's great.

**Antonio** *Sí. Claro.*

**Rondell** I gotta go out now.

**Laura** You go out?

**Rondell** You can fix yourself. Antonio will help you. It's excellent stuff, so go easy.

**Laura** Where you going?

**Rondell** I have matters to attend to. I'm still in the National Guard.

**Laura** Oh. Good luck with that.

**Rondell** So I'll leave you with Antonio.

**Laura** Bye.

**Antonio** *Adiós.*

**Rondell** I'll see you in a few days.

**Laura** Okay.  
*Rondell exits.*

**Antonio** You like, eh?

**Laura** I like.

**Antonio** Calm, peaceful.

**Laura** Yes.

**Antonio** *No problemas.*

**Laura** Right. You use?

**Antonio** Tequila, it's enough for me.

**Laura** Help me tie off.

**Antonio** *Bueno. Pero no tengo mucho tiempo.*

**Laura** That's all, then you can go.

**Antonio** *Sabe usted, en proxima semana, es el Día de los Muertos?* You know this? It's the Day of the Dead. Then we have skulls and bones. *Blanca.* Shining in the dark.  
*Ah, the rush. Fear and pain are overcome at last.*  
*It feels good, it feels sweet, it feels warm.*

**Laura** I think I'll lie down.

**Antonio** And you can hear waves, waves in the dark, waves of dark, and the moon is luminous, and the sky is vibrant, with many bright stars, and drums and flutes are playing somewhere in the distance, an Indian sound, an approaching music, the sound of America, of indigenous America, cruel and pure, and powerful, absolute, with a light surpassing the light of the Sun.

**The End**